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## EDUCATIONAL NEWS AND EDITORIAL COMMENT

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### CONFESSION OF FAITH

There are times when the *School Review* publishes statements and conclusions with which some member of the editorial staff does not agree. Indeed, it is altogether likely that a careful canvass of the situation would bring out the fact that the various members of the board of editors sometimes disagree with each other. That these disagreements and inconsistencies exist disturbs us not at all; in fact, we think of it as one of our virtues that we editorially tolerate, in the pages from which we might exclude them, statements which we personally feel sure ought to be modified.

Having thus pointed out our breadth and liberality, we shall, with less hesitation, venture a New Year's confession. The *School Review* is edited in an atmosphere through which someone looks at all articles and contributions. Seen in this atmosphere, certain articles do not seem worth printing, and our readers do not get them. Sometimes our friends tell us that our judgment is bad, and we become introspective and find that we are really more set in our opinions than we had supposed. It has seemed fitting, accordingly, that we should try to make a confession of faith, not so much for the purpose of converting others as for the purpose of explaining ourselves. If we are biased, we are, of course, only exhibiting our human nature, but it is fair that the readers of the *Review* should know at least as much about these fundamental convictions or, if one prefers, prejudices as we ourselves do. It may be that the catalogue is not complete. It may be that some reader will wish to convert the *Review* or point out prejudices of which we have not been aware. The pages of the *Review* will be open to all kinds of communications and contributions—with the usual restriction that we shall publish only what seems really worth printing.

The articles of our faith are these:

It is the duty of each state to supply secondary education to every boy and girl in the state. So far as possible, local communities should perform this duty and should equip high schools. Where the local community cannot equip and conduct a good school, some indirect provision should be made. In many cases, the state should assist, either by subsidies or by contributions to tuitions.

The course of study should be rich and should be well organized. It should be rich in the subjects which have long been traditional; it should be rich in new courses. There should be science courses, and courses in civics and the practical arts. The internal organization of these courses should be such as to make it clear that the schools have not been overwhelmed by the new subjects. There should be within each subject and within each student's curriculum a definite, well-ordered coherency.

The secondary school should reach downward into the grades, making itself responsible for all school work beyond the sixth grade. It should reach upward and organize all that is done to the end of what is now commonly the Sophomore year of college. It is in accordance with the nature of the students that secondary education should begin after the sixth grade. The proper organization of courses of study is possible only when the various forms of instruction which now duplicate and overlap and conflict in the high school and junior college are all organized as part of one coherent plan.

Teachers and administrative officers in secondary schools need more training. First, they need more knowledge in the subject-matter which is taught to students. Secondly, and no less emphatically, they need to know educational problems and the methods of attacking and solving these problems. This means that teachers must study their students and the reorganization of courses. Principals must be active in standardizing courses and departments. The complex life of a modern secondary school calls for forms of control which were not necessary in earlier days and under simpler conditions. In the degree in which high-school officers study their problems, they will be able to control the forces centering in the high school. It is futile for the high school to talk about detaching itself from higher institutions. It is idle to try to organize a high school without insight into the whole plan of educational and social life. It is presumption for high-school teachers to repudiate tradition or reject the recommendations of higher institutions until, by careful study of high-school problems, a plan of operation has been developed which is so firmly based on verifiable principles that the plan will compel all intelligent students of education to recognize its objective validity.

The social and athletic activities of students are quite as fundamental as the strictly academic activities. All should be organized after close study of the problems involved. As details in this connection, it may be pointed out that sports including all members of the school are more

wholesome than inter-school games, especially when these involve active participation only by the few. High-school fraternities are bad and should be replaced by well-regulated forms of general social life.

The school opportunities offered to students should be extended so as to include more hours in the day and more weeks in the year. As matters stand at the present time, there is a very large fund of available student energy which goes to waste because high-school students do not organize their time well.

Vocational guidance for pupils is essential. The selection of courses of study will become intelligent in the degree in which this selection is directed toward the future of the students.

Supervised study is more important than recitation.

The high school should remain free and secular. The high school has developed in recent decades rapidly and extensively because of its democratic and non-sectarian character. It should not be impeded in its growth and influence by any complicating issues of sect or class. The effort to use the school as a substitute for church organization or as a prop to church activities is a menace to democracy.

Devices must be adopted for economizing the time of students who are preparing for practical life. The efforts to secure economy should always be coupled with a recognition of high scholarship. Excess credit for high-grade work, rapid promotion for the best students, and a selection of the essentials in all courses are among the most obvious and legitimate devices for securing the right kind of economy.

It may seem hardly necessary to reaffirm confidence in the elective system and in the cosmopolitan high school. It is perhaps unnecessary to comment on the importance of recognizing individual differences among students.

These are the items of the creed of the *School Review*. Whatever promotes the movements advocated, whatever will carry the high school forward along these lines, will receive the support of the *Review*. The *Review* renews its urgent call for contributions and communications in a campaign which is taken up with new confidence in a new volume.

C. H. J.

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#### THE NEW ADMINISTRATION OF CHICAGO SCHOOLS

The administration of the schools of Chicago has been completely reorganized. John D. Shoop, for many years first assistant superintendent, has been made superintendent, and the Board of Education,

with several new members, has been organized under the presidency of Jacob M. Loeb. Both have long served the schools of Chicago, and their administration begins with promise of success. Mr. Loeb, in his inaugural address, sounds a keynote commendable in the highest degree. "As we do well or ill," said Mr. Loeb, "so shall the children of Chicago do well or ill. It will not suffice that we keep the schools at the level of the past; we must make them better."

This admirable statement will receive the commendation of every friend of public schools. Especially in large cities the fact is too often lost sight of, that schools, after all and before all, exist for the children. Schools are often made more important than schooling. Buildings, grounds, and equipment, of vital importance in themselves, too frequently engross an undue share of administrators' energies. In short, the unwieldy system itself constitutes an enterprise, which in the business world, would require the superintendence of a master-hand. There is always danger, when details of management are distributed among committees of a large board, that each committee, by very faithfulness in discharge of its own functions, may exaggerate the importance of these special duties. In so doing, a multitude of committees act as a detriment to the ultimate purpose of the entire enterprise, called by President Loeb, "the good of the children."

More and more the cities of America are coming to realize that efficient schools like efficient business enterprises must have their administrative functions centralized. To this end a highly trained, thoroughly competent, energetic officer, a city superintendent, should administer educational policies and stand or fall upon their success. In hearty co-operation with him there should be a city school board, which, if not small, should be directed by a vigorous man. This board should possess the bigness of mind, in the first place, to employ a skilled expert, in whom it has utmost confidence, and, in the second place, to leave him unhampered in the discharge of his duties. The board, thus content to delegate details of administration, may well determine the general policies of education it wishes the superintendent to carry out. A board should determine also the business policy of the school system; but the purely administrative side of business policies may wisely be delegated to a business manager, standing in relationship to the chief executive official, as assistant superintendent. It may be pointed out that large universities and some city systems now employ such an officer, subordinate to the president or to the superintendent, respectively. Experience demonstrates that when the administrator of business policies is

co-ordinate in power with the administrator of educational policies, the former so dominates the latter that education itself languishes.

In short, the *School Review* believes that the ideal arrangement for a city system must be based upon a clean-cut division of powers, the essence of which is a sharp distinction between the determination of general educational and business policies, and the administration of them. To this end, a city school board, appointed by the mayor and approved by the council, a board of equals to insure intelligent discussion, headed by a capable presiding officer, should determine educational policies, considering solely the good of the children and the financial status of the city. Under this board, there should be one administrative expert, a superintendent of schools, and, as an assistant superintendent, a business manager of schools. These two men, given a free hand in administration, and consulting with the board in matters of general policy, are agents of the board, which in its turn is responsible to the city officials and through them represents the people whom the schools serve.

The *School Review* wishes that the Board of Chicago might see its way clear to the employment of a business manager as capable in his duties as Mr. Shoop is in his. The sum of \$8,000 yearly so expended would be ten times saved, especially if competent men were given as free a hand in administering the system, just as the executive officers of a large industrial enterprise are free.

To say that the infinite number of petty details of administration ought not to be left to committees is no reflection upon the Board of Chicago or upon any board. It is simply common-sense, based upon the experience of every large enterprise from the administration of a mighty army to the management of a huge meat-packing corporation. With the additional changes in organization suggested, the new school officers of Chicago would be far better equipped to carry out the duties upon which they are so earnestly and conscientiously entering. To the Board, to Mr. Shoop, to Mr. Loeb, the *School Review* extends its best wishes as they begin their labors for Chicago and for her children.

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CONFERENCE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO WITH SECONDARY SCHOOLS  
(April 14, 15, 1916)

TOPIC: QUANTITATIVE DEFINITION OF COLLEGE AND HIGH-SCHOOL UNITS

The Joint Committee on the Program of the Conference of the University of Chicago with the Affiliated High Schools finds it necessary to change the date of the meeting. The date was originally set for

April 21. It appears, however, that this falls both on Good Friday and in the vacation of the Chicago high schools. The date has consequently been changed to the week preceding. The departmental conferences as arranged by this committee will be held in two sections, the first on Friday afternoon, April 14, and the second on Saturday morning, April 15. If it is desired by any section, Saturday, April 15, can be used for purposes of scientific excursions, visiting commercial plants, or other purposes, and there is no objection whatsoever to an afternoon session on Saturday in the case of any particular section which desires to meet.

The joint committee arranged that the general program of the session on Friday evening and the programs of the departmental sections should, so far as possible, turn about the topic, "Qualitative Definition of College and High-School Units." It was deemed advisable for a subcommittee to draft in some detail a statement of the meaning of this subject so that harmony should prevail in the organization of the various departmental conferences. The report of this subcommittee, consisting of Messrs. Church, Hosic, and Judd, is embodied in the paragraphs that immediately follow.

The problem which is suggested by the foregoing title grows out of the fact that heretofore definitions of units as given by the North Central Association and other standardizing bodies have been very largely quantitative in character. All of these definitions have told the number of hours during which classes must meet and the number of weeks in the year during which classes shall meet, but there has been very little effort to discriminate between advanced courses and elementary courses. There has been very little effort to point out the emphasis which should be laid upon particular topics within a given scheme. Indeed, the definitions as now printed usually enumerate without emphasis a whole series of topics, many of which are very trivial and some of which are of major importance. It is now proposed that we follow the lead of the North Central Association, which is attempting first of all to ascertain what the actual practice of high schools is, and that we follow the lead of this association farther in attempting to make some discriminations which are based upon the qualitative characteristics of units.

For example, the North Central Association is now discussing the general question whether the same amount of credit should be given either toward high-school graduation or toward college admission for courses that are given in the Freshman year and courses that are given in the Senior year; or, to put the matter in still another form, is the high-school Senior to be allowed to take courses which are also open to the Freshman

and receive full credit? In this connection it may be remarked that the University of Michigan is allowing certain courses taken in the junior high school to be counted toward college admission. One of the problems, therefore, is the problem of grading courses as elementary and advanced courses and distinguishing between the topics which may legitimately appear at the one level or the other.

In the second place, it has appeared important to a number of high schools of this immediate environment to distinguish between work done at a high level, that is, with a high grade, and work that is done at a low level, that is, with a mere passing-grade. Indeed the University by its legislation is prepared to enter into negotiations with high schools which are prepared to redefine the units in terms of the grade of work done by the student.

A third problem can be defined by referring to the fact that credit in certain courses given in the high school depends upon an extension of the class period. For example, laboratory work which is not prepared for outside of class periods usually is credited only when the exercises are twice as long as ordinary class exercises. In view of the fact that supervised study is now being introduced into courses other than laboratory courses, it may seem necessary to modify the amount of credit again in terms of the method of conducting the courses. How far should courses in various departments be defined in terms of the kind of work that is done, and can more credit be given for certain kinds of preparation than for others? It is quite possible that in a given course the credit should be distributed at different stages of the course on a different basis, that is, part of the year laboratory work or supervised work may be more in evidence than at other periods. Here again the methods of procedure are more significant than mere external qualitative divisions.

The general problem of relating one department's work to another raises the question whether a student should be given full credit for a course in case he is pursuing five other courses at the same time. How far should a unit in a given department depend upon assignments that are independent of the amount of other work that a student is doing, and how far is the work of a given course modified by the other engagements of a member of the class? In each of the foregoing cases the problem of emphasis upon particular topics and the method of treating different portions of the course will suggest themselves as questions that need to be considered.

Finally, quantitative tests have been undertaken in various departments. Such studies have long been familiar in evaluating elementary



work, and the examination plan of evaluating courses is familiar in secondary schools. The English Council has undertaken quantitative studies of English courses, and several elaborate studies of courses in mathematics have been reported. Some review of tests of high-school units would be an appropriate part of the program of sections.

Very truly yours,

H. V. CHURCH

*Chairman of the Committee on Conference Program*

NATHANIEL BUTLER

*Chairman of the Committee on University Relations*

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THE FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL  
OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

Twenty-five states represented and over five hundred present—that is the record of the fifth annual meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English. The keynote of the several sessions was definite progress in the solution of definite problems. Chief among these were the improvement of speech, the development of the school library, the preparation of school and college teachers, the vitalizing of oral composition, and the selection of essentials in English grammar.

The work of ten committees was represented at the meeting. Among these committees were those on Plays, on the Reorganization of the High-School Course, on the Work of the First Six Elementary Years, on the Labor and Cost of English Teaching, on the Preparation of College Teachers of English, on English in the Normal School, and on American Speech. The Committee on Scientific Standards made no report but will soon publish in the *English Journal* a bibliography bringing the list of investigations in the field of English up to date. New committees were provided for to deal with the development of libraries and with the subject of economy of time in the teaching of English. Among the resolutions adopted was the following offered by Professor F. N. Scott, of the University of Michigan:

*Resolved*, That the National Council of Teachers of English approves the movement to raise the academic standard of the profession of journalism and, therefore, recommends to secondary-school authorities that no student be encouraged to enter the newspaper profession without further academic training than is afforded by the secondary school.

## WHAT LIES BACK OF CO-OPERATION IN TEACHING ENGLISH

L. H. Jones, superintendent of the Indianapolis schools in the International Congress of Education held in Chicago in 1893, said:

Language, writing, and drawing considered in themselves are purely arts; their end is skill, . . . language . . . has no ennobling ideas in itself. Only when these branches are used in the expression of ideas whose origin is in some other field of thought do they become charged in themselves with thought, or feeling, or motive as to become individual factors in spiritual development.

Here we have the essence of the movement which, starting twenty-five years ago, resulted in the subordination of formal English grammar to the place of incidental study which it occupies today. Moreover, the statement of Superintendent Jones may be said to be the basic doctrine of the movement, in its incipency in 1915, which takes the ground that formal classes in English, especially in English composition, are occupying altogether too large a place in the program of the elementary, and especially in the program of secondary, schools. This new idea urges less time for formal English classes, and insists upon more and better instruction in the mother-tongue in departments other than English. The leaders desire that English composition be taught in all classes, in all school activities at all times, by every teacher, both by his example and by careful supervision of his pupils' oral and written work. Through these means, all teachers are to help establish good language habits. The movement for correlation with "other subjects," as yet in its early stages, is most significant.

To put this in another light, language lessons were introduced about 1860 to 1870, as a substitute for the unspeakable grind of grammar. Today these language lessons have themselves to face somewhat the same criticisms that formal grammar faced twenty-five years earlier. Just as the study of grammar, with elaborate formulas of parsing, analysis, diagramming and the like, became an end in itself and lost whatever educational import it may ever have had, so today language lessons have become stereotyped, ends in themselves, whose educational value is extremely doubtful. Most English compositions written for prescribed classes in composition, of whatever grade, from elementary school to university, are exercises performed mechanically to meet requirement, generally disliked by the pupils. They are utterly devoid of the viewpoint of authorship. The pupil's attention is directed not upon the subject-matter of his thought, but upon the formal elements of his composition, structure, style, and diction. This is not the way to teach pupils to write and speak.

Formal English composition courses are drill exercises in the mechanical elements of writing or speaking. As such they must always hold a place in the curriculum. Drill is absolutely necessary to secure mechanical and elementary rhetorical accuracy. The place for such language lessons should be confined to classes in the English department frankly given over to formal drill; but the great bulk of English composition ought to be taught in connection with other subjects. The geography lesson, the theme in history, the topical recitation in civil government—these, and numberless similar occasions furnish the best practice ground for establishing language habits. As Mr. Jones said in 1893, "In some other field of thought, language lessons become charged with feeling or motive." In these other fields we have the viewpoint of authorship—an overwhelming interest in the subject-matter, an earnest desire to be "the servant of an idea"; this the pupil of eight or eighteen or twenty-eight must have. He must write or speak with his mind centered upon the message he wishes to proclaim.

Samuel Kirkham and his followers in 1823 were twenty-five years ahead of their time in directing the pupil's attention away from rules of formal grammar to the ideas represented by grammatical relationships. Greene and his followers in 1847 were twenty-five years ahead of their time in insisting that the sentence rather than the work is the basis of the study of English grammar. Swinton with his language lessons in 1873 was a quarter of a century in advance of his time in subordinating formal grammar to practice in writing and speaking as the only means of attaining proficiency in these arts. In 1893 Superintendent Jones and a few other school men were twenty-five years in advance of their day in asserting that the best training-ground for practice in writing and speaking is not formal English composition classes, but in other fields of thought. Today we are just catching up with these latter-day leaders.

About the middle of the century the old conception of grammar promulgated by Murray and his followers, that grammar is the art of speaking and writing with correctness and propriety, was changed. Educators, influenced by the common-school revival, the movement for oral instruction, object teaching, and inductive teaching in general, came to realize that the grammar of a language is not an art but a science. Language is not an art of acquirement; it is an art of representation. English grammar and its successor, language lessons, are not content studies. The grammar stage in any language study is a purely reflective stage, a self-conscious attitude coming late in the series of vernacular studies. It can be of assistance in securing command over the vernacular

only in a secondary or subordinate sense. In much the same way language lessons are not a content study; they are drill exercises in the mechanics of grammatical and rhetorical accuracy; they are not fertile fields for practice in writing or speaking. No drill exercise in which the attention of the performer is centered primarily upon method is ever free from constraint. Vital practice in the use of the mother-tongue approximates its greatest value when the student, having roughly thought out his scheme of procedure, breaks free from conscious attention to the mechanical details of his composition, and, wrapped in the relation to each other of the ideas he wishes to present, advances freely and fluently toward his goal. Then, after the first rough draft of his composition is completed, he is in a position to apply himself with intense interest to the question of reorganization, to the matter of sentence structure, to the proper selection of words. All these duties are motivated by the desire to give to his message the most effective vehicle of expression.

This attitude of authorship is just as essential for effective school exercises in composition as it is for the magazine writer, the editor, the lawyer. Language habits, both oral and written, exclusive of course of matters of mere mechanical accuracy, may be cultivated by the school, but not primarily in classes devoted solely to formal composition. Such is the educational doctrine that lies back of the movement for co-operation in teaching English.